



Rural District of Great Ouseburn.

Dr. J. M. Benson's Annual Report

_____ on the _____

Sanitary Condition of the Rural District of Great Ouseburn, for the Year 1925.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my annual Report for the year ended December 31st, 1925, in accordance with instructions from the Ministry of Health (paragraph 13, circular 540, of the 18th December, 1924), which orders that this Report should be a Survey Report which I take it to mean, a Report shewing the progress, if any, made in dealing with all matter effecting the Public Health; during the last 5 years, including the year 1919-1920.

The Great Ouseburn Rural District coincides with the Poor Law Union of that name, comprising 33 Parishes, having a total area of 45,969 acres. It is a long, narrow, irregular shaped area situate on the right bank of the River Ouse, immediately above York. Its greatest length being 18 miles, and its width varying from 2 to 7 miles. The District closely adjoins the North Riding of Yorkshire for many miles. In the extreme north the district is there bounded by the river Ure, while further south the Nidd provides a portion of the boundary line, and then traverses the district in its torturous way across the Vale of York.

The highest points (from 200 to 250 feet above ordnance datum) are in the West and North, while in the East and South we get very low tracts draining direct to the Ouse, the lowest point being alongside that river in the Parish of Acomb (25 feet O. D.). The Geological Formation is almost entirely hidden by the enormous deposits of gravels and sands of glacial and post glacial period. These are responsible for the series of mounds and hills in the western portion, which give the country an undulating aspect. Eastwards we have the more recent and almost flat alluvial deposit in the great plain of York. The District is well supplied with roads. Radiating southwards from Boroughbridge are three main arterial roads, leading to York, Wetherby (the Great North Road), and Knaresborough respectively; while the main roads going west to east are the Knaresborough and Green Hammerton main road, and the Collingham and York main

roads. Numerous district roads link up with the above and provide adequate cross communication. There are also seven railway stations on the two branches of the London and North Eastern Railway which traverse this district. There is no canal, but the river Ouse above York is canalised for water traffic, as is also the river Ure in the North.

Population (census 1921) 11,033. Population (estimated 1925) 11,210.

Number of inhabited houses (1921) 2,649. Number of families or separate occupiers (1921) 2,599. Ratable Value of District £92,217, and the sum represented by a penny rate is £285. The Population can fairly be put into two classes, Agricultural as to 60%, the balance being principally engaged on railway and city occupations.

VITAL STATISTICS. BIRTH RATE.—Population 11,210. 182 Births were registered during the year, giving a birth rate of 16.2, (England and Wales for 1925 was 18.3), compared with 18.9 for 1924. There were 98 male and 84 female births. Of this number 9 were illegitimate—5 male and 4 female—compared with 11 in 1924, 7 in 1923, 11 in 1922 and 17 in 1921.

DEATH RATE.—134 deaths were registered, giving a death rate of 11.9 (England and Wales 12.2), compared with 11.4 in 1924 and 11.3 in 1923. There were 60 male deaths and 74 female. Amongst these 36 were over 70 years of age, 19 being over 80 and 2 over 90 years of age.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.—9 deaths were registered under 12 months of age, giving a death rate of 49 per 1,000 births (England and Wales for 1925 was 75), compared with a death rate of 51 for 1924, 67 for 1923 and 89 for 1922. Of the 9 deaths, 4 were male infant and 5 female, of the latter one was an illegitimate child. Causes of death were Broncho-pneumonia 2, Congenital Heart disease 1, Purpura Hæmorrhagica 1, Improper feeding 3, Convulsions 1 and Cleft palate 1.

Among children from 1 to 2 years of age, there were no deaths. From 2 to 5 years of age there was one death only, due to convulsions from teething.

Among children from 5 to 15 years of age, there were 4 deaths: 1 due to Broncho-pneumonia, 1 due to Tubercular Meningitis, 1 to Rheumatic Fever and 1 to Burns. Among persons from 15 to 45 years of age there were 16 deaths. 5 to Tuberculosis of lungs, 2 to Influenza, 1 Heart disease, 1 Diabetes, 1 Puerperal fever, 2 to Accidents, 2 Suicide, 1 Gallstones, 1 Intestinal obstruction.

Among persons over 45 years of age there were 105 deaths as follows—Heart Disease 19, Old Age 12, Cerebral Hæmorrhage 8, Chronic Bronchitis 8, Cancer 20, Brights Disease 3, Influenza 8, Diabetes 3, Pneumonia 3, Tumour of Prostate 1, Arterio-Sclerosis 7, Aneurism 1, Tuberculosis of Bone 1, Tuberculosis of Lungs 2, Cirrhosis of Liver 1, Paralysis 1, Syphilis 1, Melancholia 1, Pernicious Anæmia 1, Abscess of Kidney 1, Accident 2, Appendicitis 1.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES including Tuberculosis.—45 cases were notified during 1925, compared with 37 in 1924 and 31 in 1923. Scarlet Fever 21, Diphtheria 8, Erysipelas 2, Puerperal Fever 1, Pneumonia (lobar) 2, Influenzal Pneumonia 2, Tuberculosis of the Lungs 6, other forms of Tuberculosis 3.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL, ACOMB.—36 cases were admitted during 1925, compared with 22 in 1924 and 13 in 1923. 21 came from Gt. Ouseburn Rural District, and 15 from outside districts. Included in the number were 26 cases of Scarlet Fever, 8 Diphtheria (2 being combined cases of Scarlet and Diphtheria) and 3 cases of

Typhoid (Enteric) Fever from outside (2 from Easingwold, and 1 from Linton on Ouse), and 1 case of Erysipelas admitted from York. There were no deaths.

SCARLET FEVER.—21 cases were notified compared with only 4 in 1924, and 7 in 1923. The majority of the cases were notified during the last quarter of the year and came from Acomb and Poppleton, the mostly thickly populated and most adjacent to the city of York, where the infection was caught. The cases were for the most part of a mild type, and proceeded to convalescence without the intervention of complications. The disease in its present mild type is exceedingly difficult of diagnosis even by medical men, and therefore no doubt there is more risk of infection from unrecognized cases going about. In *all* cases of sore throat in children a Doctor should be called in. I recall a case amongst this series where a child fell from her pony and was thought to be suffering from the effect of the fall, whereas she was delirious in the initial stage of a sharp attack of Scarlet Fever.

DIPHTHERIA.—8 cases were notified, compared with 2 in 1924, 5 in 1923 and none in 1922. There has been a marked decline in the number of cases of Diphtheria in recent years; due doubtless to their prompt isolation and treatment with 'serum'.

TUBERCULOSIS OF THE LUNGS.—6 cases were notified during 1925, the same number in 1924 and 8 in 1923. 7 cases died during the year, 4 males and 3 females. In many cases in Rural Areas you find them amongst families overcrowded. The parents physically of poor 'stock', the houses damp and dark, all the conditions favourable for the development of the Tubercle Bacillus.

PNEUMONIA—including Influenzal Pneumonia. 4 cases were notified in 1925 and there were 5 deaths, compared with 13 cases notified in 1924, and 8 deaths. Obviously all cases of acute Lobar Pneumonia and Influenzal Pneumonia are not notified to me.

TUBERCULOSIS.—other forms, i.e. Glandular and Bone disease. 3 cases were notified and 2 deaths. This form of Tuberculosis is due to the Bovine type of Bacillus, and infection is carried by drinking the milk from infected Dairy Cows. It is a pity we cannot obtain always pure milk in the country, but it is often dirty and often Tuberculous; and is not safe for children unless previously boiled. A great deal remains to be done in the Housing and Milking of Dairy Cattle, to ensure a pure supply. Cow sheds are too often dark and not sufficiently ventilated and strict cleansing of hands and teats not invariably practised. The Public also are careless in the storing of the milk.

POOR LAW RELIEF.—The amount for the year ending 31st March, 1926, was £1375. Five Medical Officers covering the whole of the District are appointed and paid by the Guardians.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.—3 Hospitals are maintained in the District, namely: the Infectious Diseases Hospital at Acomb with 16 beds and a staff of 5; a Smallpox Hospital at Hessay, with accommodation for 4 female and 4 male beds; and the Poor Law Infirmary at the Workhouse Gt. Ouseburn, with 16 beds and a maternity ward. Portable Disinfectors and Horse Ambulances are provided at the Isolation Hospital for infectious cases only. For removing cases of illness or accident to York or Harrogate, the Police Ambulance and a Red Cross Ambulance are available; the latter gratis if no fee can be paid; these are from York, Knaresborough, and Harrogate, and are often utilised. There are no clinics or treatment centres in the District.

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A Horse Ambulance is provided at the Isolation Hospital, for infectious cases only. For removing cases of illness or accident to York or Harrogate, the Police Ambulance and a Red Cross Ambulance are available—the latter gratis if no fee can be paid; these are from York, Knaresborough, and Harrogate, and are often utilised. There are no clinics or treatment centres in the District.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

There are no whole-time men. Part-time men are the M.O.H. and Sanitary Inspector; these being the only two where salaries are partly paid under Public Health Acts or Exchequer Grants.

The Sanitary Inspector has now an Assistant Inspector. District Nursing Associations provide for Health Visits where required.

Four District Nursing Associations supply the District—the Green Hammerton and Whixley Association, the Great Ouseburn and District Nursing Association, the Hunsingore District Nursing Association, and the Boroughbridge and Aldborough Nursing Association. These supply Nurses, whose services are much appreciated and constantly in demand, either as Health Visitors or for nursing in the home; and are largely utilised for maternity cases. The Associations receive a grant equivalent to half their expenses from the West Riding County Council, for the services of the Nurse as School Visitor.

I believe there is a Child Welfare Centre at Boroughbridge, but the M.O.H. has never been officially informed of its organisation or activities.

LEGISLATIONS IN FORCE.

The Rural District Council have Bye-Laws relating to—

The Regulation of Common Lodging-Houses. 26th March, 1877.

The Cleansing of Footways and Pavements adjoining any Premises; The Removal of House Refuse from any Premises; The Cleansing of Earth Closets, Privies, Ashpits, and Cesspools, belonging to any Premises.

17th January, 1887.

The Lighting, Ventilation, Cleansing, Drainage and Water Supply of Dairies and Cowsheds in the occupation of persons following the trade of Cow-keepers and Dairymen. 27th February, 1888.

The above apply to the whole District.

The Rural District Council also have Bye-Laws relating to—

New Buildings, and certain matters in connection with Building, applying to the whole District, with the exception of the contributing places of Acomb, Boroughbridge, and Upper Poppleton. 12th December, 1924.

URBAN POWERS.

The Rural District Council possesses the following Urban Powers—

In the Parishes of Acomb and Boroughbridge—Under the Public Health Act, 1875 : Sections 42, 43, 157 and 158 ; Section 169, excepting so much thereof as relates to the Provision of Slaughter-houses ; and Section 170. Date of Order, 14th Dec., 1876. Under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1870, Section 23, so far as it relates to the height of rooms intended to be used for human habitation. Date of Order, 22nd March, 1907.

In the Parish of Acomb—Under the Public Health Act, 1875 : Section 160. Date of Order, 10th June, 1914.

In the Parish of Upper Poppleton—Under the Public Health Act, 1875 : Sections 42 and 44, 157 and 158. Under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Section 23, so far as it relates to the height of rooms intended to be used for human habitation. Date of Order, 22nd March, 1907.

In the Parishes of Acomb, Boroughbridge, and Upper Poppleton—Under the Public Health Act, 1875 : Sections 112 and 113. Date of Order, 3rd Feb., 1912. Under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907 : Section 51. Date of Order, 5th March, 1912.

And have Bye-Laws in the Parishes of Acomb and Boroughbridge relating to—Nuisances, Slaughter-houses, the Cleansing of Footpaths and Pavements, the Removal of House Refuse, the Cleansing of Earth Closets, Privies, Ashpits and Cesspools. Dated 8th October, 1878.

And also have Bye-Laws in the Parishes of Acomb, Boroughbridge, and Upper Poppleton, with respect to—New Streets and Buildings. Dated 23rd December, 1907. Regulation of Offensive Trades. Date of Order, 14th November, 1912.

Private Street Works Act, 1892—Acomb : The provisions of this Act, except so far as they relate to the Sewering of Streets, apply to certain Streets in the Parish of Acomb. Date of Order, 22nd March, 1907.

The following provisions of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, viz. : Sections 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 29 and 33 comprised in Part II. Sections 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49 and 50 comprised in Part III. Sections 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 67 and 68, comprised in Part IV. Part V. and Section 95 comprised in Part X. are in force in the several contributory places within the District. Sections 17, 27, 31 and 32 comprised in Part II. of the Act of 1907 are in force in the contributory places of Acomb, Boroughbridge, and Upper Poppleton. Section 26 comprised in Part II. of the Act of 1907 are in force in the contributory places of Acomb and Boroughbridge ; and Section 21 of Part II., and Sections 39, 40, 41 and 42, comprised in Part III. of the Act of 1907 are in force in the contributory place of Acomb. Date of Orders, 15th June, 1909 ; 5th March, 1912 ; and 10th June, 1914.

Infectious Diseases (Prevention) Act, 1890—Section 5. 7th April, 1908.

The Public Health Act, 1875—Section 149. 15th September, 1923.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.—35.44 % of the population is supplied from Waterworks. The supply is constant, and direct to houses except for six stand-pipes in Green Hammerton, and one in Acomb. The bulk of the water is supplied by the York Waterworks Company ; the remainder from deep bore into red sandstone. The balance of the population is supplied from wells and deep bores supply about 1,650, or 0.15 % of our population in six parishes.

Other deep bores are scattered about in isolated places ; and approximately 50% of the people are dependent on shallow wells, which in the main, yield sufficient and wholesome water. The latter are a continual source of worry and anxiety, however, to the M.O.H. ; and analyses frequently reveal contamination of these shallow wells, resulting in their closure or repair.. All the water in the deep bores and shallow wells is extremely hard and a source of great inconvenience to the housewives.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.—The area is under the jurisdiction of the West Riding of Yorkshire River Board and therefore kept under review. 65.8% drain to Sewerage Farms worked on broad irrigation, or sub-irrigation principles ; 9.00% drain to cesspools at present, but when the Acomb Sewerage Scheme is complete, three-quarters of these will be discontinued. The rest, which include many isolated farmsteads, drain to ditches.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—As to quality, the case is fairly well met. The different kinds are approximately :—

Water-closets	....	....	390
Privies	....	....	2164
Slop Water-closets	....	....	5
Pails	....	....	55

SCAVENGING.—Public Scavenging is carried out in the Parishes of Acomb and Boroughbridge, comprising, approximately, 45% of the population. An arrangement for collecting dry refuse, such as waste tins, bottles, etc., is carried out in five other large villages. The remainder are dealt with by the occupiers and applied direct to land.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Total number of inspections made in 1925 by your Sanitary Inspector, for Nuisances only, was 85. Notices served—informal 81, statutory 4 ; complied with, 79 informal, 4 statutory. There were no legal proceedings taken. During the five years 1920-1925 your Inspector made 643 inspections, for Nuisances, only, and, with the exception of two legal proceedings taken in 1920, all statutory notices were complied with, and the majority of informal notices were complied with. Only two per cent. of nuisances reported required a statutory notice, a personal interview with your Inspector being usually all that is required.

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS OR REGULATIONS.

Bakehouses (2)	....	....	1 in Boroughbridge, 1 in Acomb.
Fried Fish Shops (4)	....	....	1 in Acomb, 1 in Boro'bridge, 1 in Green Hammerton, 1 in Great Ouseburn.
Tallow Melter (1)	....	....	1 in Boroughbridge.

SCHOOLS.—There are 19 Schools in the District. Three are supplied with water from mains, all the rest from ordinary wells. The sanitary condition is generally satisfactory. The responsibility for recommending the closure of the Schools for short periods, owing to the prevalence of infectious diseases, rests with the M.O.H., and in the case of rural schools serving scattered areas, it is sometimes advisable, and helps materially in checking their spread.

HOUSING.

GENERAL HOUSING CONDITIONS.—Total number of houses in District, 2,782; of these 2,417 are working-class houses. The estimated shortage at the end of 1925 was 220. It is agreed to build 200 in five years, and the first contract for four houses has been let. Sites for 16 more have been bought, and sites for 16 more are in negotiation. There is a considerable increase in population at Acomb, as a result of 102 new houses being built during the last four years, and this is likely to continue.

OVERCROWDING is present in most of the Parishes, due to scarcity of houses, and the only remedy is building more. The cases where overcrowding exist is when two families occupy one house., or where lodgers are taken in. It has not been possible to take any action in these cases, owing to the shortage of houses.

FITNESS OF HOUSES.—The general standard of housing, although improving, much remains to be done, as many cottages are old and badly arranged; unpaved yards are frequent, and "damp courses" non-existent. The prevailing defects found in unfit houses are dampness, lack of lighting, and lack of ventilation. These defects are principally due to the owners' neglect, or inability to meet the cost of repairs out of the small rents obtainable from old property. Action is taken under the Public Health Act, 1875, to remedy sanitary defects. During the last five years, seven Closing Orders were made under the Housing Acts. Our difficulty in remedying unfitness is due to lack of available jobbing bricklayers, etc., to do the work.

HOUSING STATISTICS.—At the end of 1924, there were 65 houses not reasonably fit for habitation; and 174 houses totally unfit for habitation. At the end of 1925, there were 22 houses not reasonably fit for habitation, 43 had minor defects, and 172 were totally unfit for habitation. 73 houses were inspected during 1925 for housing defects—30 were found satisfactory, and 43 were defective; 49 working-class dwellings were erected during 1925; of this number 32 were built under the 1923 Act (State-aided Housing Scheme), in which the builder is given a lump sum of £76 18s. 6d. on completion.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.—The number of milk cows kept in the district is, approximately, 850, and the number of cowkeepers producing and selling milk is 60; all are registered. Number of retail milk-sellers, who are also cowkeepers, is 23; and three milk retailers only. Total number of retail milk-sellers registered is 26. Total number of cowsheds is 100. Some 40 Inspections were made under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshop Regulations, 1888, but no full record is kept. I think it would be desirable to make a systematic yearly inspection of cowsheds and milk retailers, and to take samples for analysis occasionally; not with a view to any harshness or unreasonable requisitions, but to get the intelligent co-operation of the farmer and milk-seller, in ensuring as pure a milk supply as possible. Registers are kept as required by Section 2 (3) of the 1922 Milk and Dairies (Amendment) Act. The M.O.H. is empowered to call in the services of a Veterinary Officer for the inspection of dairy cows.

MEAT.—There are ten Slaughter-houses licensed in the District, and these are inspected 3 to 6 times a year. 45 inspections were made during 1925.

		No. of Private Slaughter-houses in use in Area.		
		1920.	Jan., 1925.	Dec., 1925.
Registered	....	9	9	9
Licensed	....	1	1	1
		—	—	—
Total	....	10	10	10
		—	—	—

BAKEHOUSES.—There are two Bakehouses in the District; neither are underground, and are satisfactory.

In conclusion, I beg to acknowledge the assistance readily accorded to me, in the compilation of your Report, by the Sanitary Inspector (Mr. C. Cawood); also I am indebted for information obtained from the Survey Report of 1907 by the County Medical Officer (Dr. J. R. Kaye).

J. M. BENSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

